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NAFTA LAND TRANSPORTATION STANDARDS SUBCOMMITTEE
AND TRANSPORTATION CONSULTATIVE GROUP WORKING GROUP

MAY 28, 2003 - SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS
REPORTS OF THE WORKING GROUPS

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JOINT SESSION
TRANSPORTATION CONSULTATIVE GROUP WORKING GROUPS #1 AND #3 AND
LAND TRANSPORTATION STANDARDS SUBCOMMITTEE WORKING GROUP #1
MAY 28, 2003/SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS

CONCLUSIONS STATEMENT

TCG Working Group on Cross-Border Operations and Facilitation (TCG #1)

1. The Parties agreed to periodically update the motor carrier operations handbooks issued last year. The United States reiterated its offer to translate Mexico's handbook into English as soon as it is issued in final form. The handbooks are posted on the countries' respective websites.
2. Canada reported that International Registration Plan (IRP) member jurisdictions have approved an amendment to the IRP agreement to facilitate Mexican Government eligibility for full participation in the plan, and that International Fuel Tax Agreement (IFTA) members also have taken a similar action. It was noted that the *ad hoc* trilateral committee on IRP and IFTA issues would meet in Mexico on July 9, to continue discussions on a possible three-phase approach for immediate, intermediate, and long-term participation by Mexican motor carriers in the IRP and IFTA programs.
3. Mexico expressed concern about the availability of U.S. insurance coverage for Mexican motor carriers, particularly for carriers engaged in the cross-border transportation of hazardous materials. The Parties agreed to ask insurance regulators in the three countries to convene a meeting of the trilateral *ad hoc* government-industry insurance working group as soon as possible and invite Mexican motor carriers to participate in the meeting.
4. The Parties reviewed and agreed on a paper describing the Working Group's scope of work. It was noted that because of TCG #1's broad areas of responsibility and interdisciplinary nature it would be important to continue to work closely with other TCG and LTSS working groups. It was agreed that TCG #1 and LTSS #1 would continue to meet in joint session.

LTSS Working Group on Driver and Vehicle Standards and Motor Carrier Supervision (LTSS #1)

1. The Parties acknowledged that much has been accomplished with respect to making the countries' standards more compatible, noting that the remaining work requires bilateral consultations.
2. The Working Group agreed to prepare a report summarizing the work completed so far. Recognizing that standards for drivers, vehicles, and carrier oversight evolve over time, the Parties agreed to continue to work together bilaterally or

trilaterally as appropriate. It was also concluded that such work could be continued under the aegis of TCG #1, and that a recommendation to that effect would be submitted to the TCG/LTSS heads for their consideration.

TCG Working Group on Electronic Data Exchange (TCG #3)

1. It was agreed that given its technical nature, TCG #3 would continue to work independently, but that it would meet with TCG #1 and LTSS #1 periodically to report on its ongoing work.
2. Mexico reported on the progress of its data exchange effort with the United States, emphasizing that both countries maintain strict controls over users' access to the database. The driver information is updated regularly and made available to the United States and Canada.
3. Mexico asked for U.S. commercial motor vehicle information similar to that currently made available by Mexico to the United States. The United States noted that there is no centralized federal database in the United States as vehicle registration records are maintained by the individual states. The United States agreed to consult with the IRP organization to determine how to best respond to Mexico's request.
4. Mexico gave the United States computer files containing data on 4,000 U.S. drivers and vehicles that have been cited for violations while operating in Mexico.

Participants:

Canada

Andrew Spoerri
Geoff Gander
Brian Orrbine
Darren Christle
Audrey Henderson

Mexico

Gerardo Michel
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United States

María Lameiro
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LTSS WORKING GROUP Vehicle Weights & Dimensions Harmonization (LTSS #2)

The three co-chairs, Jim March from the United States, Clement Thomas from Canada, and Hector Guerra Solalinde from Mexico, each offered opening remarks. These remarks emphasized the need to continue to identify areas where the Working Group could add value and to identify specific products and milestones to guide future activities. The three countries each recognize that freight volumes moving between the three countries are expected to continue to increase and that improving the compatibility of weights and dimension regulations along with other standards applicable to trucking in the three countries will help improve the efficiency and lower the costs of moving those goods.

No non-governmental organizations were present came to the meeting to present positions or provide information related to Working Group activities.

Jim March summarized discussions from the last four Working Group meetings. He noted the status of two reports produced by the Working Group, one a side-by-side comparison of weights and dimension limits in the three countries and in states and provinces within those countries. The second was a report on performance criteria that can be used as a basis for considering the potential performance and suitability of future changes in vehicle weights and dimensions in the three countries. Both reports have been updated recently, but especially in the case of the side-by-side report, it is important to have periodic updates. Mr. March noted the efforts over the past several years to identify specific inconsistencies in weights and dimension regulations on a regional basis and the fact that there may be greater opportunities for regional harmonization than for harmonizing weights and dimensions at the national level. Finally he noted that several issues raised at previous meetings remain outstanding including compatibility of regulations concerning intercity coaches and auto transporters.

Representatives from each country presented updates and status reports on weights and dimensions activities since the last meeting.

- In Canada the 4 Atlantic Provinces have harmonized weights and dimensions regulation that became effective in 2002. Those weights and dimensions have already been reflected in the most recent update of the side-by-side comparison on weights and dimensions regulations in jurisdictions within each country. Those Provinces have also adopted a regional agreement on oversize-overweight permit provisions. Similarly the 4 Western Provinces have also developed a regional agreement on oversize-overweight permits. Ontario and Quebec have been working to harmonize elements of their weights and dimensions regulations. Changes will be phased in over a period of years. Issues have come up concerning the expanding use of "super-single" tires that carriers are using in increasing numbers to replace dual tires on tractor and trailer axles. These super-singles offer savings in cost, fuel consumption, and weight, but there are questions about their pavement impacts compared to traditional dual tires. A new generation of super-singles is being marketed as being at least as friendly to pavements as traditional dual tires, but testing has not been done at the weights

that are carried in some Canadian Provinces. A study is underway to investigate pavement impacts of super singles in greater detail. Another new issue concerns the use of dromedary units to haul munitions. A recent FHWA rulemaking allowed the use of these configurations, but they exceed Canadian wheelbase limits. Canada has begun a review of its performance criteria that have been in effect since 1987 to see if they are still applicable. A meeting was held in May 2003 involving Ontario and Michigan officials to discuss harmonization issues that might improve the efficiency of cross-border trade. This is part of an on-going process to identify regional issues that affect specific cross-border operations.

- In Mexico, unlike Canada and the U.S., the federal government establishes vehicle weights and dimensions limits on all but strictly local roads. This makes it somewhat easier for the federal government to manage weights and dimensions. There have been pressures from industry to increase vehicle weights, but those pressures have been resisted. Potential changes in weights and dimension standards were released for public comment in January 2002 but there was no consensus on those changes so they were not adopted. A new study is underway that will be released for public comment, but the expectation is that there will be no changes to the weight limits adopted in 1997. The issue of super-single tires is of concern to Mexico as well. Evidence of their pavement impacts is mixed and research is underway to more fully evaluate those impacts. There is also some concern about the potential safety of super-singles. Mexico is in the process of reclassifying their highways into three classes – primary, secondary, and complementary – that will have different weight limits. There are provisions that cover situations when trucks must travel on two different road systems. Previously some roads were overclassified, but that situation is being corrected. A modernization program is also underway to make needed upgrades, including bridge improvements to accommodate the vehicle weights currently in use. There have been significant improvements in technology used for weight enforcement and vehicle inspection. Mobile scales have been found to be effective in reducing overweight violations.
- In the U.S. there have been no substantial changes in vehicle weights and dimensions at the federal level since 1982 except for the 1991 freeze on longer combination vehicle weights, dimensions, and routes. There is substantial discussion about weights and dimensions among interest groups as major reauthorization of federal surface transportation programs in the U.S. is being considered. The U.S. Department of Transportation made no recommendations for changes in weights and dimensions limits in its reauthorization proposal and views the weights and dimensions issues as part of a larger question about how we are going to serve the rapidly increasing volumes of freight projected during the next 20 years. This will have to be considered within a multimodal framework that considers infrastructure investment options, and important safety, productivity and environmental stewardship issues. The Transportation Research Board's recent truck size and weight report has created some controversy. It

recommends increases in weights and dimensions along with a federally-supervised, State administered permit program to control operations and evaluate impacts of the increased weights and dimension limits.

In discussing future activities there was general support for producing a brochure that outlined the weights and dimensions at which 4 common vehicle configurations used in cross-border trucking could be operated. Many of these weights and dimensions already have been tabulated in the Working Groups draft Performance Criteria report, but some additions may be needed. Also, each country will work to identify specific routes on which these weights and dimensions are allowed. This would provide operators a useful guide on routes they can use for any cross-border movements. A representative of the Texas Department of Insurance indicated that such a document would make it easier for the insurance industry to provide insurance to Mexican carriers operating in the U.S.

A technical working group will be formed to synthesize information on super-single tires and to investigate whether there are differences in the treatment of super-singles that would hinder cross-border travel.

Working Group members discussed in detail the work plan for the coming year. A copy of that work plan is attached.

A mid-year meeting will be held in Phoenix, Arizona in November. Bernie Gazdzik of the Arizona Department of Public Safety will arrange the meeting.

LTSS Working Group 2 - 2003 Work Plan

1. Convene a meeting of the Working Group in November 2003 in Phoenix, Arizona to discuss progress on work plan activities. Convene additional meetings of LTSS 2, as necessary, to address the work plan objectives and to discuss regulatory harmonization needs and priorities.
2. Continue, in cooperation with other levels of government and the private sector, to identify and discuss issues related to the harmonization of vehicle weights and dimensions in Canada, Mexico, and the United States.
3. Explore the feasibility of establishing annual stakeholder meetings (involving both government and industry) under two regional forums:
 - issues related to travel between the United States and Canada and
 - issues related to travel between the United States and Mexico.
4. Facilitate meetings involving State, Provincial, and private sector groups to identify opportunities to remove regional impediments related to vehicle weight and dimension regulations that hinder safe and productive commercial motor vehicle transportation. Priority will be placed on:
 - a. Continuing government/industry discussions and exchange within the region encompassing Ontario, Quebec, New York, and Michigan, including organization of:
 - A meeting to review of developments since the meetings held in 2000 on weight and dimension-related harmonization opportunities and/or regulatory impediments within the region, through open discussions with the carrier and shipper communities
 - An information exchange session between Ontario and Michigan on the weight and dimension regulatory reforms being contemplated in Ontario
 - b. Establishing government/industry discussions and exchange within the region encompassing the New England states and the Atlantic provinces to identify weight and dimension-related harmonization opportunities and/or regulatory impediments
 - c. Identifying the potential needs for government/industry discussions and exchange of views on weights and dimensions issues that may affect transportation between Mexico and the U.S. and the appropriate timing and format for such discussions.

5. Continue to identify and seek to resolve issues related to specific types of commercial motor vehicle operations such as intercity motor coaches and auto transporters. As needed and appropriate, technical working groups may be formed to address these issues.
6. Establish a technical working group to consider issues surrounding the more widespread adoption of super single tires on commercial motor vehicles. Synthesize information, research, and other materials from the three countries related to the use of super singles to identify any operational concerns associated with the use of those tires. Identify whether there are any issues associated with allowable weights on super singles that may affect their use in different jurisdictions. Report to the Working Group the preliminary results of these activities at the Fall Working Group meeting and recommend any additional work that may be needed to further investigate issues associated with the use of super single tires.
7. Update the side-by-side comparison of weights and dimension limits in Canada, Mexico, and the U.S., approve the update at the November Working Group meeting in Phoenix, and post on the Transport Canada website upon approval.
8. Begin development of a brochure showing the minimum weights and dimensions for the 4 common vehicle configurations operating in international commerce between Canada, Mexico, and the U.S. Begin the identification of routes on which vehicles of those weights and dimensions can be operated within each State or Province. Report on progress at the November Working Group meeting. The ultimate objective of this brochure is to provide all the information that carriers would need to know concerning where they can legally operate 4 common vehicle configurations.
9. Revise and update the draft Safety Performance Criteria report as a focus for discussion of weights and dimensions issues, including:
 - a. Solicitation of comment from governments, the carrier community and other interested stakeholders on the proposal and its implications
 - b. Continue to pursue support from federal, state, and provincial governments for principles contained in the Safety Performance Criteria report.
 - c. Work towards completion of the report and submission to LTSS officials for approval in 2004.
10. Continue to provide a forum for exchange of developments, regulatory and policy changes and results of research and other activities related to vehicle weights and dimensions.

LTSS Working Group on Hazardous Materials & Dangerous Goods (LTSS #5)

Domestic Regulatory Development

During the 2002-2003 working year, the LTSS working group sessions provided an opportunity for each country to keep abreast of changes to the domestic dangerous goods transport regulations of the NAFTA countries. This periodic interchange facilitates the ability of the competent authorities in each country to communicate to their stakeholders any pertinent issues which affect trade between the NAFTA countries and to comment on these issues to their co-chair counterparts. While the NAFTA objective of substantially harmonizing the regulations has been met, regulatory differences still exist and will continue to exist based on each country's unique domestic needs and political and economic factors. Continued presence of the working group offers an opportunity for the NAFTA countries to exchange information with respect to the ongoing development of their domestic regulations.

Cooperation in the Development of the United Nations Model Regulations

The LTSS Working Group also provides an excellent forum for discussion of amendments and issues regarding the UN Model Regulations for the Transport of Dangerous Goods. The UN Model Regulations serve as a basis for updating the international modal regulations for the transport of dangerous goods including the ICAO Technical Instructions for the Safe Transport of Dangerous Goods by Air (ICAO TI) and the International Maritime Dangerous Goods (IMDG) Code. The UN Model Regulations are also a basis for changes to the domestic dangerous goods transport regulations for each of the NAFTA countries. As such, it is important to establish coordinated positions on proposed changes to the UN Model Regulations in order to take into account North American interests. Mexico indicated that it would attend the UN Sub-Committee of Experts on the Transport of Dangerous Goods (UN SCOE) meetings on a more consistent basis and assured they would be present at the upcoming SCOE meeting in July, 2003. The U.S. and Canada were extremely pleased and encouraged Mexico to ensure that they consistently attend the UN SCOE meetings in order to provide input on changes to the UN Model Regulations which ultimately have a major impact on transport regulations of the three NAFTA countries. During the working group meeting the group considered the proposals submitted to the UN Transport of Dangerous Goods Sub-Committee and exchanged views on the proposals. The US shared its draft position paper relative to all of the official proposals submitted for the upcoming UN meeting. The working group members considered the issues of particular importance to North America.

North American Model Standard

The group continued its efforts in the creation of a North American Model Standard (NAMS) for the transport of dangerous goods which will include aspects not addressed by the UN Model regulations such as regulations specific to road and rail transport (i.e. rail tank cars and cargo tank trucks). The group discussed the possibility of streamlining the NAMS to concentrate primarily on the areas which are not addressed by the UN

Model Regulations. It was agreed that the NAMS would be easier to update and more practical in its scope if it addressed more specifically the areas of regulation omitted in the UN Model regulations. The Working Group agreed to work towards reformatting the NAMS in the form of a model standard for road and rail regulations. Canada provided draft requirements for the design, construction, modification, inspection, testing, and qualification of ton containers for implementation within the NAMS. The working group agreed that the draft could serve as a basis for a proposal to the UN SCOE to include requirements for ton containers within the UN Model Regulations.

Emergency Response Guidebook

The group noted a major accomplishment in the creation and distribution of the Emergency Response Guidebook. The Emergency Response Guidebook (ERG2000) was developed jointly by the US Department of Transportation, Transport Canada, and the Secretariat of Communications and Transportation of Mexico (SCT) for use by firefighters, police, and other emergency services personnel who may be the first to arrive at the scene of a transportation incident involving a hazardous material. It is primarily a guide to aid first responders in (1) quickly identifying the specific or generic classification of the material(s) involved in the incident, and (2) protecting themselves and the general public during this initial response phase of the incident. The ERG is updated every three to four years to accommodate new materials and advances in technology. The next version is scheduled for 2004. The group noted with great satisfaction that the use of the guide has expanded well beyond North America and has been adopted by several countries in South America, Asia and Europe. The guidebook has been published in English, Spanish, French, Chinese, Russian, Dutch, Korean, Thai, Hebrew, Polish, Italian, German and several other languages. The popularity of the guide has become so widespread as to necessitate a name change. What was once "North American Emergency Response Guidebook" has been renamed the "Emergency Response Guidebook" due to its extensive use outside of North America.

Website Link Updates

The following websites are provided for further information relevant to the work of Working Group 5:

<http://hazmat.dot.gov/nafta.htm> - General working group information
<http://hazmat.dot.gov/gydebook.htm> - Emergency Response Guidebook Info. (US DOT)
<http://www.tc.gc.ca/canutec/en/guide/ERGO/ergo.htm> Emergency Response Guidebook Info. (Transport Canada)
http://hazmat.dot.gov/hmt_security.htm - Security Related Information
<http://www.unece.org/trans/danger/danger.htm> - United Nations Dangerous Goods Home Page
<http://www.economia-noms.gob.mx/> - Official Mexican Normas

TCG Working Group on Rail Safety and Economic Issues (TCG #2)

Rulemakings

The United States briefed the Canadian and Mexican delegations on several rulemakings now in various stages of development that have implications for cross-border rail operations:

- Drug and Alcohol Testing
- Event Recorder Crashworthiness
- Locomotive Cab Noise
- Reflectorization of Rail Equipment
- Train Horns

Mexico in turn briefed the group on its current psycho-physical testing program for transport workers, including train crews, and the changes that they plan to make in the area of drug and alcohol testing.

The group discussed options for drug and alcohol testing for Canadian and Mexican crews crossing the US border, and the US agreed to consider the options in developing its final regulations.

Further Harmonization Possibilities

Canada and the United States briefed Mexico on discussions they have been having to identify regulations that could be made more compatible, to improve operations across the US/Canadian border. Mexico agreed to review the list to determine if any affected traffic across the US/Mexican border, and to participate in discussions of those issues.

Operating Procedures at Borders

Mexico reported on an internal review they have made of SCT requirements at border crossings, in the hope that they can standardize their own procedures at all rail border locations. They led a general discussion about the extent to which the three countries treat apply their own regulations and inspection procedures consistently across all their border crossings. Mexico agreed to send its review template and report, and the US and Canada agreed to evaluate their own procedures at Laredo and Detroit, within 6 months.

Joint Inspection Plans for Upcoming Year

The US and Mexico discussed plans to conduct joint inspections at border locations, and to have training for inspectors in each others' inspection procedures. (Appropriations problems in Mexico and the US precluded most such inspections this past year.) Mexico was also invited to be an observer at joint US/Canada inspections.

Security Regulations

The US briefed Canada and Mexico on border security requirements.

NAFTA Rail

The US and Mexico briefed the working group on the regulatory requirements governing the KCS/Tex-Mex/TFM transaction in the two countries. In the US, the Surface Transportation Board has jurisdiction over the economic aspects of the KCS and Tex-Mex financial consolidation, while the FRA will review the Safety Implementation Plan. In Mexico, SCT, Economia and several other agencies will review the competitive and financial aspects of the proposal.

Truck Bolsters

The US briefed the working group on the problem of high failure rates for truck bolsters on rail cars in the North American fleet. The AAR has taken steps to increase testing and repair/replacement.

TCG Working Group on Science and Technology (TCG #4)

The meeting opened with a welcome and review of past TCG#4 history and 5-year workplan. The 5-year activities included:

- Dedicated Short Range Communication (DSRC) harmonization
- DSRC multi-application interim standard
- DSRC joint development and testing in a border crossing application
- Electronic placarding of dangerous goods

The last TCG#4 meeting was in October 2001. At that meeting, the issue of overlap with other groups was explored, the need for consultation was recognized, and the DSRC border crossing work was confirmed. The harmonization of DSRC to 5.9 GHz was included as an extension and an electronic placarding project was adopted. Security was raised as a possible meeting topic in the future.

The Group also received a number of presentations intended to inform members about current R&D activities which could be the basis for future collaborative research proposals. These included:

From Canada:

- Federal Innovation Initiative
- Transport Canada's *Straight Ahead* Document (Vision for Transportation) ITS
- R&D Plan for Canada
- Road Safety Projects
- Sustainable Transportation Programs
- International Cooperation

From Mexico:

- DSRC Technology Applications
- ITS Architecture Development
- Accident Prevention including Human Factors and Training
- Pavement Improvement
- Workforce Education
- Import Data Collection

From U.S.:

- Joint ITS R&D with the European Union
- R&D Research Funding Mechanisms
- Freight Policy Development
- ITS Demonstration Projects
- Establishment of National "511" Transportation Information Number

The Group recognized the need to update its 5-year plan and to begin the process the Group engaged in a number of in-depth discussions that included:

1. DSRC harmonization, particularly migration to 5.9 GHz and multiple applications.
2. U.S. and Canada presented briefings on ISO Technical Committee (TC) 204 with an emphasis on data dictionary and message sets for Fleet Management and Freight Operations, specifically electronic placarding of hazardous materials and electronic supply chain manifest.
3. The importance of participation in standards activities by each country, actively or as an observer.
4. Agreement was reached that each country would produce a paper identifying internet resources on transportation R&D that can be shared with each other.

As a result of these discussions, the Group agreed to:

1. A Workshop and continuing coordination of ITS Architecture developments, including harmonization of *critical* architecture features and attributes. (Consider incorporating in an existing event.)
2. TCG#4 will begin planning for and conduct of an ITS workshop to analyze each country's ITS Architecture and general ITS applications relevant to LTSS, including opportunities and benefits, one of which is the migration to 5.9 GHz. Industry will be invited to offer comments and suggested demonstrations for TCG#4 to consider. (Stand alone meeting; date and venue are to be decided.)
3. A Meeting to evaluate and update the 5-year workplan including the addition of ITS security applications and strategies, and workforce training and skill sets. (Consider incorporating in an existing event.)
4. U.S. and Canada will develop a paper on opportunities for Mexico to become more active in ISO TC204, for example joining TC204 as P-member and participating in activities relating to 5.9 GHz and supply chain tracking and security.
5. Each country will produce a paper identifying internet resources (indicating format, e.g. link reference for full reports) on transportation R&D.

TCG Working Group on Maritime and Port Policy (TCG #5)

1) Marine Safety and Security

TCG-5 had a thorough discussion of developments in new maritime security requirements coming out of the International Maritime Organization (IMO) and the United States. We reviewed the new International Ship and Port Security Code (ISPS) requirements of the amended SOLAS convention (Chapter 11), and the Maritime Transportation Security Act (MTSA). Following a brief by the U.S. Coast Guard representative, both Canada and Mexico reported on the similar ISPS Code implementation activities in their countries. All agreed to continue sharing information on security requirements and implementation, with an agreed goal to attain parallel implementation plans. This is deemed an especially important goal given the normal high level of maritime activity in the Gulf of Mexico and the Great Lakes. An already scheduled Canada-U.S. bilateral meeting on these subjects (June 12) was opened to Mexico as well. It was agreed to establish trilateral meetings for the purpose of carrying out a parallel process for installation and data-communication regarding the ISPS code.

2) Seafarers' Identity Documents, Visas, and Detentions.

We reviewed the current global efforts underway at the International Labor Organization (ILO) to rewrite ILO Convention 108 on Seafarers' Identity Documents. The three countries generally agreed on the need to create a new secure document that establishes a positive and verifiable identification of seafarers. There was a general expression of concern that failure to reach an agreement at ILO could result in a continuation of on-board detentions of foreign seafarers in the United States. All three countries committed to work toward a successful negotiation in Geneva on a new ILO Convention 108.

The Mexican Delegation asked the U.S. Delegation to forward to the U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service a request to eliminate the visa requirement for seafarers of Mexican nationality; and, as a provisional measure, to extend the effective period of this class of visa for up to five years, as is granted to some European Union countries; furthermore, Mexico indicated that it would support, at the ILO Convention to be held in Geneva, the proposed new draft for the ILO Convention 108 relating to seafarers' identity documents.

3) Exchanges of Technical Personnel

Following a discussion of recent experiences in exchanging ship inspection and Port State Control personnel, all three countries agreed this has been an exceptionally valuable undertaking. We agreed to continue the exchange practice. We also agreed to look for new ways to expand on cooperative programs among and between our maritime academies and other seafarer training institutions. Of particular interest was the on-going relationship between Mexico and the California Maritime Academy. We agreed to explore the feasibility of enhancing information exchange capabilities via the worldwide web.

4) The Insurance "Crisis"

We held a brief discussion to exchange views and information on the price and availability of "Protection and Indemnity" (P&I) insurance in the maritime market. In the wake of September 11, the P&I clubs have raised premiums, and reduced availability in some markets.

5) Data Exchange

Our discussion of actions we have already taken to provide each country with improved access to our maritime (and seaborne trade) data reinforced the earlier discussion of enriching our various websites. We exchanged website information, and discussed work underway to improve these sites.

6) Other International Organizations

In recognition of the wide array of policy issues which affect international ocean shipping, we exchanged updates and views on current matters in several fora: WTO, ILO, APEC and OECD. At the WTO, we noted that the process of exchanging demands and offers includes the maritime services sector, but that there appeared to be very slow movement (across sectors) at this time. In the ILO, in addition to the key work on amending Convention 108 noted above, there is an effort underway to revise, amend and modernize several dozen seafarers' welfare conventions into a single new instrument. The central goal of the ILO is to achieve a convention that is broadly supported by governments to enable a large number of ratifications. Within APEC, we discussed the emerging consensus to wrap security matters into the on-going work in transportation issues. Lastly, with regard to the OECD and its Maritime Transport Committee, we reviewed the current work program, especially within the subject area of the economic consequences of substandard shipping, and security.

7) Short Sea Shipping

A rather lengthy discussion of the U.S. "Short Sea Shipping" initiative was greeted enthusiastically by both Canada and Mexico. As one means to alleviate surface mode congestion, Short Sea Shipping options appear to have both genuine promise and support, especially in the context of partnerships with truck and rail companies. The U.S. provided a draft "Memorandum of Cooperation" to Mexico and Canada, with a request for comments, additions or deletions; all agreed we should seek to have the final document signed as soon as possible. Mexico indicated its interest in signing the "Memorandum of Cooperation" within the context of NAFTA, as soon as the document is finalized.

8) TCG-5's Future

Lastly, the three NAFTA partners reaffirmed full support for continuing the TCG-5 meetings as a valuable information resource. In view of the interest indicated by the three

delegations in topics that involve ports, and in light of the importance of the relationship and trade existing among the three countries, it was resolved to propose the representation [in TCG-5] of government authorities and institutions related to the port industry in order to address common agenda items among our countries.